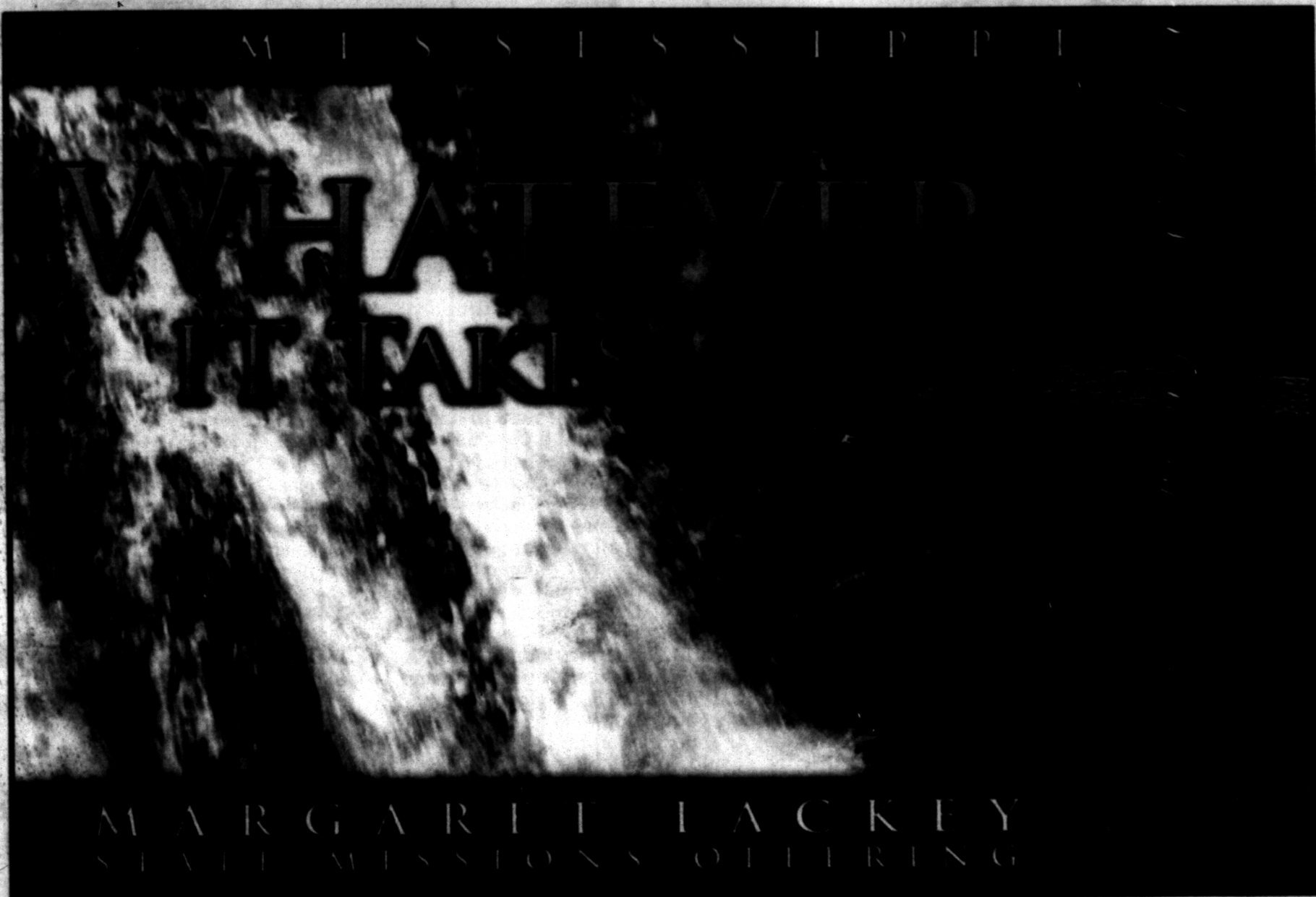


Record

THE BAPTIST SPECIAL EDITION

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION



MARGARET LACKEY
STATE MISSIONS OFFERING

Your Margaret Lackey Gifts...

- Assisted 90 student participants in the Christian Women Job Corps sites around the state last year.
- Started 8 new churches and provided ongoing support for nearly 40 church planters.
- Allowed BSC ministers to encourage more than 1,000 women to join the church in a camp in the Delta.
- Sent over 1,000 campers to the Reformed Hills, where 15 children made professions of faith.
- Assisted more than 1500 volunteers in responding to six disaster areas.
- Assisted over 1,000 people in the Delta in the area of health care.



WHATEVER IT TAKES

First Person: A 'dream come true'

By Erica Harms
Correspondent

With only a thatch roof, walls made of dirt, and a rusty twin-sized bed missing its mattress, a Darfur refugee stole my heart. She welcomed me into her home with a cup of coffee, ironically served in a little china glass. The two hour process it took for her to heat the coffee beans, grind them by hand, and flavor the final product gave me a chance to hear her story.

That afternoon conversing with this lady in 120 degree weather was a dream come true for me.

For ten years, she and her five children have been living behind these dirt walls with no electricity or running water. Although she is married, her husband cannot afford to drive back and forth to work every day, so he only comes home on the weekends.

For as long as I can remember, I've wanted to visit the people of Africa just like that. When the opportunity arrived for me to go to the Sudan last March, I didn't hesitate. Through a partnership between the Missions Mobilization Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and Morrison Heights Church in Clinton, our team spent two weeks in Khartoum, a city with more than 12 million people, primarily working with a relief organization. I learned two lessons during that time that still burden my heart.

First, I learned how important short term volunteers can be to the ministry of those living on the field full-time.

The couple

with whom I worked does what they promise the government they are there to do, and as a result have earned a positive reputation with government officials and others throughout the entire country. Their faithfulness to put into action that which they say they are there to do allows folks like me access to not only encourage them with the familiarities of home but also to more boldly proclaim the truth.

Secondly, I learned about God's heart for Muslim people. God didn't call me to travel all the way to Sudan because He loves those people so much that He wants them to know about Himself, although He does. He called me to Sudan because He loves me so much and wanted me to experience His heart for the nations. The feeling I had when I awoke to the sound of the call to prayer every morning at 5a.m. was dark and eerie, but it an incredible reminder to pray for the people I was among.

Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world. Five times a day, Muslims stop and ritually pray toward Mecca. With Psalm 86:8-10 on my mind, the only thing I knew to pray was that the people around me would know the one true God.

Every Friday night in a large cemetery on the outskirts of town, a sect of Muslims known as the Whirling Dervishes congregate for demonic worship. For an hour, they chant "Allah, Allah, Allah" while dancing and smelling incense. I saw one man whipping himself, another biting himself, and some just circling the crowd that was gathered.

At one point, a dead body was laid in the center of the circle while folks continued to chant to their false god, children included. I left there with a renewed sense of urgency to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20).

I genuinely believe that when God calls an individual to go on a mission endeavor, He also calls individuals to financially and prayerfully support that one. From the depth of my heart, I say thank you for supporting the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering, which not only allowed my dream to travel to Africa come true, but also sent the light of Christ into one of the darkest places on earth.

Among the gods there is none like you, O Lord; no deeds can compare with yours. All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, O Lord; they will bring glory to your name. For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God. Psalm 86:8-10 (NIV)

FREE RESOURCES AVAILABLE AT WWW.MBCB.ORG

POSTERS, CLIPART, PRAYER GUIDE, TWO BULLETIN
INSERTS, LEADERS BIBLE STUDY MATERIALS FOR ADULT
YOUTH, CHILDREN, AND PRESCHOOL, AND MORE

MISSISSIPPI

Offering supports Garaywa campers

By Erica Harms
Correspondent

The excitement in the air was contagious. Girls of every shape, size, and color scurried here and there excitedly greeting old friends and already making new ones. Laden down with pillows, sleeping bags, and suitcases, each looked a bit bewildered as she tried to find which way to go. At every turn were friendly smiles and cheerful voices singing out, "Hi! Welcome to Camp Garaywa."

Garaywa Camp and Conference Center, located within the Clinton city limits, has been hosting Mississippi Baptist GA (Girls in Action) and Acteens camps since 1947. Funding by the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering, the Mississippi Cooperative Program, the Edwina Robinson wMu Special Day Offering, and a nominal camper fee allowed 1,664 girls to come through the gates this summer.

Every morning, campers rotated between several missions-oriented activities, including a share time with the missionary serving at camp that week. After lunch, camp was alive and vibrant with splashes from the pool, laughter from the ropes course, and squeals from the zipline in the woods. The evenings concluded with a special event and time of worship.

"I know what a difference camp can make in the lives of students

because I know what it did for me," said Katie Welch.

Welch, member of Highland Church in Laurel, served on staff as a cabin leader for two summers, a unit leader her third year, and most recently as the 2008 assistant director.

Like Welch, both campers and staff alike have encountered the Lord inside the Garaywa gates. For eight weeks, 36 college students made Garaywa their home as they invested in the lives of the fourteen campers in their cabin each week.

"This summer was more than I could have ever asked for. It was at camp this summer that I felt God leading me into full-time career missions. I never could have imagined how He was going to use this summer to change my life," said Christa Hudson, a cabin leader and Mississippi State University student from Clarkson Church in Mathiston.

She was one of several cabin leaders to answer that call.

"We expect God to move and work among our campers, but it's so exciting when He begins to work among our staff," Welch said.

This year's theme, highlighted with Isaiah 40:30-31, was On Your Mark, Get Set, Go! The goal was for campers to not only have a positive camping experience, but to come to know the Lord in a personal way, to understand that they are uniquely created by God,

and to catch a vision of what they can do in missions.

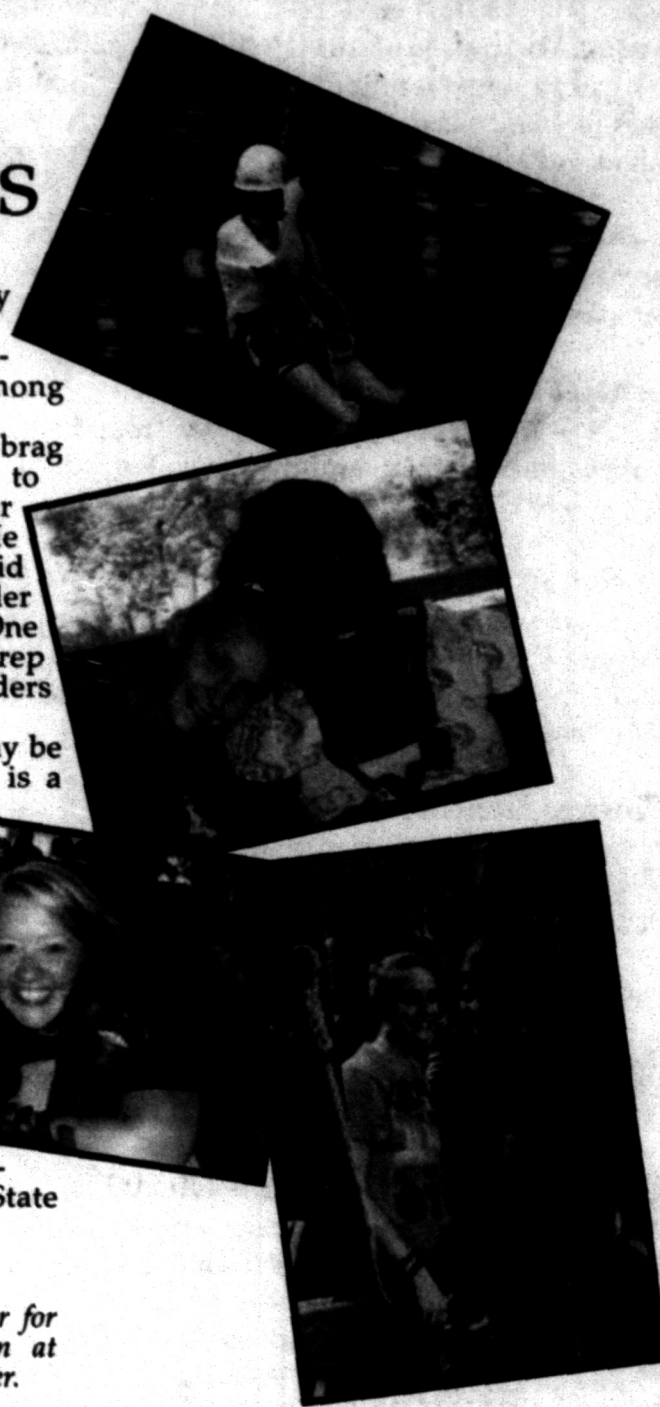
As a result, nearly 40 professions of faith were made among campers this summer.

"There's nothing for us to brag about. It was God who chose to show up and move among our cabins. We're just blessed He chose us to be a part of it," said Ashley Waldrep, a 2008 unit leader from Blue Mountain College. One of three unit leaders, Waldrep supervised 12 of the 36 cabin leaders on staff.

Though the city of Clinton may be just outside the gate, Garaywa is a world apart. Moss covered trees create an atmosphere of timeless expectation, mystery, and seclusion.

Mississippi Baptists have played an intricate role in reaching people through Garaywa as they have prayed for its ministry, donated their gifts and time in service there, and given generously to the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering.

Harms served as program director for the 2008 summer camping season at Garaywa Camp and Conference Center.



New work flourishes as Tupelo storefront church grows

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

In a 1950's-era storefront, The Church at Trace Crossing is taking seriously its simple vision to be like Christ.

"Many people, one passion," is more than just a slogan — it's part of the DNA of this young church, said pastor Kevin Wood, a former teaching pastor at the Church at Brook Hills in the Birmingham, Ala.

"I was happy being there," Wood said, "but there was a group of about eight people in Tupelo who had been seeking to start a new church, and they visited Brook Hills one weekend. I wasn't even preaching that weekend — I think I had just prayed — but that initiated the interest in me coming."

The group from Tupelo had been meeting since January of 2006 for Bible study, prayer, and mutual encouragement. It had visited several churches including Colonial Hills Church in Southaven, and in June of 2006 began meeting in four small rooms at the Tupelo Furniture Market each Sunday and Wednesday and had grown to almost 20 people. On August 4, 2006, the church invited Kevin Wood to become their first pastor.

"There were about 20 people at that particular meeting," said Wood, "and I asked them one question: 'Are you angry or are you hungry?' In other words, I wanted to know were they angry at where they were or were they hungry for something God has created in you? To a man and woman, they said they were hungry. God had created a new desire in them."

Wood accepted the invitation from the "no-name" church to become their pastor, and the church adopted the Trace Crossing name. On October 1, the church met officially for their first worship gathering with Kevin Williams leading worship and Kevin Wood preaching. Forty-five people attend. Through June, 2008, the church has averaged 194 in worship attendance, having leased a storefront in the West Main Shopping Center in Tupelo. This gives the church 10,000 square feet for worshipping together, children's ministry, and student ministry.

The church's schedule includes Bible study at their facility for children and students on Sundays, with worship at 10:30 a.m. for all. Wednesday evenings includes services for preschoolers, children, and youth, and an adult Bible study. Adults

participate in LifeGroups, small group Bible studies for adults of all ages designed to provide a place of meaningful connections. Groups meet in various homes throughout Tupelo, Slatillo, and northeast Mississippi on Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday nights. The groups are centered around growing deeper in God's Word and growing closer to other believers. The church considers LifeGroups the lifeblood of the church body.

Funds from the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering go toward paying the lease on the church's facility. "It has removed from us the pressure of the lease," said Wood.

"We know that these funds will be there every week to help us with our biggest expense other than personnel. We've been able to do all we can to make our building comfortable and accessible. Our location is great because we're smack in the middle of town. It gives us a great environment for worship and children's and student ministry."



A PASTOR'S WELCOME — Kevin Wood, pastor of The Church at Trace Crossing in Tupelo, is seen in front of the church's facility. Funds for the lease are provided by the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering. (Photo by Tony Martin)

Offering Ministry Descriptions

Associational Mission Projects - \$200,000

Margaret Lackey funding helps empower local mission initiatives in evangelism and community ministry. For information call David Michel at (800) 748-1651 or (601) 292-3231.

Garaywa Camp and Conference Center - \$365,000

Home to over 1,800 girls each summer and year-round retreats. For information call Kay Cassibry (800) 748-1651 or (601) 292-3318.

Central Hills - \$365,000

Serves as an exceptional 540 acre, year-round facility for church retreats and summer camp for boys. For information call Jim Ray at (662) 289-9730.

Christian Women's/Men's Job Corps - \$30,000

Men and women are paired with Christian mentors in order to gain life and job skills that will help them reach economic independence. For information call Tammy Anderson at (800) 748-1651 or (601) 292-3323.

Church Planting - \$400,000

Provides financial assistance and training for church planters to penetrate lostness across our state. For information call Ed Deuschle at (800) 748-1651 or (601) 292-3224.

Criminal Justice Ministries - \$50,000

Trains prison volunteers and provides leaders, Bibles, and Discipleship studies to inmates. For information call Charles Jones at (662) 846-7676.

Cross Cultural Outreach - \$30,000

Recognizes the various language, ethnic and culture groups in Mississippi, and offers gospel insight through leadership training and missional strategies. For information call David Alexander at (800) 748-1651 or (601) 292-3364.

Disaster Relief - \$60,000

Over 200 members of the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Team provides training for working with communities as first responders to give care and hope in crisis. For information call Jim Didlake at (800) 748-1651 or (601) 292-3338.

College & University Outreach - \$65,000

Provides program assistance for campus ministry to International and African-American students, and missions mobilization assistance for those involved in campus and church student ministries. For information, contact Weaver McCracken at (800) 748-1651 or (601) 292-3299.

Literacy - \$15,000

Trains leaders to teach other people to read and speak English, providing an open door for sharing the Gospel message. For information call Paula Smith at (800) 748-1651 or (601) 292-3336.

Pastoral Benevolence - \$20,000

Provides financial relief and counseling for ministers and their families recovering from professional turmoil. For information call Bruce Cappleman at (800) 748-1651 or (601) 292-3225.

Volunteer Missionary Assistance - \$650,000

Assists short-term volunteers from Mississippi Baptist churches to serve in North American and International Missions. For information call Ken Rhodes at (800) 748-1651 or (601) 292-3239.

Seminary turning out changed men

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Chris Buckhalter recalls how he loved to fight. "I was living crazy," said the former University of Southern Mississippi football star from Collins and brother of Philadelphia Eagles running back Correll Buckhalter. "It didn't matter if the other guy was big or small, I was ready to fight. If you poked me or pushed me or said the wrong thing, I was ready."

Buckhalter's wild side led him to become involved in a 1997 armed robbery in Jackson that resulted in the death of one man and the wounding of another. Facing a capital murder charge, he pled guilty to manslaughter and was sentenced to serve his time in the State of Mississippi's penal system.

After a stint in a regional prison, Buckhalter was transferred to the Big House — the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman. "I knew I had been dropped off at a bad place," he said.

Seeking a productive way to serve his penitentiary time while hammering out some plan for the rest of his life, Buckhalter found the New Orleans Seminary extension program at Unit 30 on the grounds of Parchman.

"When I found Jesus, He flipped me upside down," Buckhalter said. "He changed me. He really changed me. He changed me as a dad, a husband, and a man. You can say anything you want to me now — you can even shove me — and you'll be able to tell that Jesus has changed me."

Buckhalter's reformed behavior didn't go unnoticed by prison officials, who because of his good conduct offered him an opportunity to serve the remainder of his sentence working at the Governor's Mansion in Jackson. He

turned it down to remain at Parchman and finish his seminary degree.

He will graduate in December, the same month he is scheduled to be released from prison. His life plan now includes Christian ministry.

"God has a call on his life," said Johnny Bley, the former Mississippi Baptist pastor and New Orleans Seminary faculty member who has directed the Parchman extension program since August of 2004.

"His spirit and his knowledge are exceptional. He has a lot to offer any Christian ministry that is willing to accept him as a man who had his life turned around by Jesus," Bley said.

There are currently 76 Parchman inmates like Buckhalter in the extension program. Seventeen students will receive associate degrees in December, and 14 will receive masters degrees along with Buckhalter. The youngest student is age 24; the oldest student is age 62.

Bley, who also directed the New Orleans Seminary extension program at Angola Prison in Louisiana prior to coming to Parchman, said the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering, along with New Orleans Seminary, private donors, and the willingness of prison officials to work with the seminary, have been critical to the success of the extension program in Mississippi.

"The offering provides textbooks, Experiencing God workbooks, and other items for the inmates to study and use. The prison system is the largest mission field in Mississippi, and the offering is making a difference," Bley said.

"Without the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering, we wouldn't be here," Bley pointed out. "These men are receiving a Christian education, and that will have a tremendous impact on their communities when they are released back into the free world."

"That should be important to all of us."

How to schedule a guest speaker ...

Mississippi Baptists are trained and ready to speak in your church on state missions (at no cost to the church). Please contact your speaker of choice directly and schedule a date for your congregation to promote the MLSMO.

Ministry Speakers

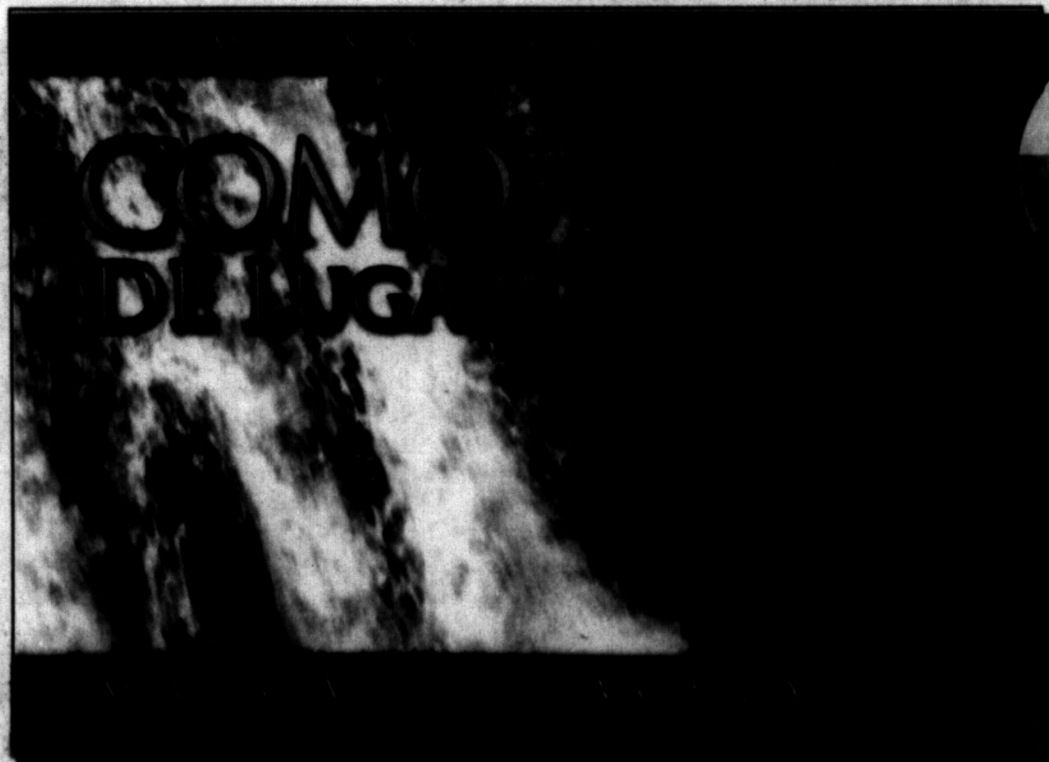
Call (800) 748-1651 to speak directly with the coordinator of the particular ministry for which you are interested.

BSU Directors

Call Peggy Powell at (800) 748-1651, ext. 299, or (601) 292-3299 locally.

Associational Missions Directors

Have all received Margaret Lackey Speaker's Training and can be contacted at your local association office.



Recourses
disponible
en español
gratis.

STATE CHANGES

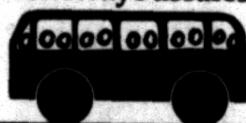
1. **Eastport Church, Iuka**, has called David Dill as pastor. He comes with wife Tonyea and son Trae.
2. **Bethel Church, Smith Association**, has called Bradley Troth as pastor. Shown are Troth, Dana, Abigail Troth and Sarah Mouton.
3. **Glendale Church, Glen**, has called Brandon Powell as pastor. He comes from Beechmont Church, Louisville, Ky., where he was minister of youth. He and his wife Jennifer are expecting their first child in late August.



2. The Troths

Call for free BROCHURE
BAPTISTRIES
 HEATERS, PUMPS
FACTORY DIRECT
 TOLL FREE 1-800-251-0679
 www.fiberglasschurchprod.com
 FIBERGLASS BAPTISTRY CO.
 3511 HIXSON PIKE • CHATTANOOGA, TN 37415

RiteBus • RitePrice • RitePlace
 Talk to Bill Clark 601-750-2364
 www.ritewaybussales.com



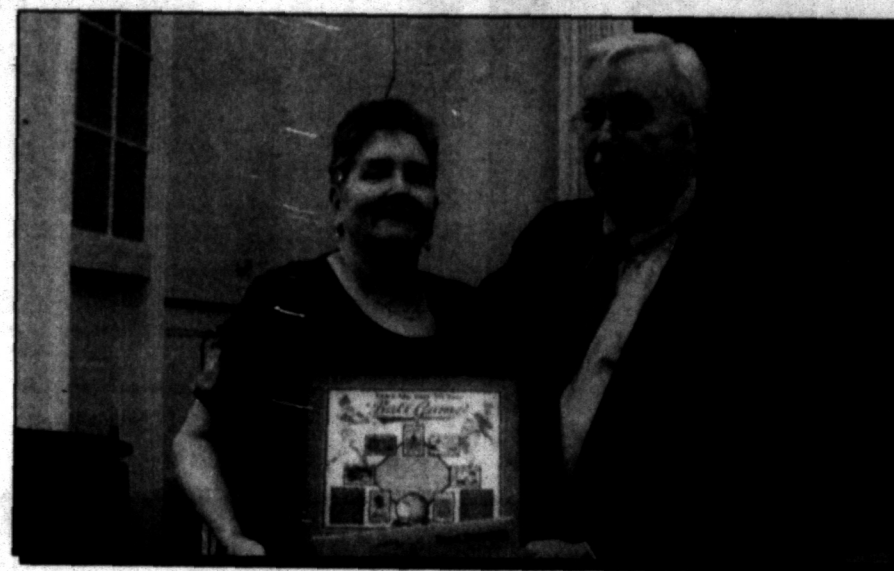
RiteWay Bus Sales
 2069 Hwy 49 South, Florence, MS 39073

JUST FOR THE RECORD

1. The TeamKids of **Bethel Church, Bogue Chitto** were recently honored with a luau/pizza party to celebrate each member learning the books of the Bible.
2. **Macedonia Church, Brookhaven**, will host Team Impact Aug. 15 - 17, 7 p.m. Call (601) 833-6760 for more information.
3. **Eastwood Church, Indianola** is sponsoring the Mid-Delta Youth Fest Aug. 23 - 24. Sat., concert with Flights From Egypt and speaker Cody Deese, 7 p.m., Indianola Academy Gym; \$5. Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m., Jason Morant and Deese, Eastwood Church.
4. **Calvary Church, Meridian**, is hosting Aaron Odom Aug. 24, 6 p.m.
5. **First Church, Soso**, ordained Kyle Warren to the ministry Feb. 24. He serves as minister of students at West Laurel Church, Laurel.
6. **First Church, Foxworth**, celebrated pastor appreciation day recently by sending pastor Charles L. Nail and his wife Sonja on a trip to New York City. Nail is fulfilling a lifelong dream to see the Yankees and Red Sox play in Yankee Stadium.



1. Bethel Church



6. The Nails

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

VBS 2008

1. **Fernwood Church, Fernwood**: July 16 - 18; record attendance of 59; shown are the participants.
2. **Lakeside Church, Hattiesburg**: June 2 - 6; enrollment, 91; daily attendance, 75; five decisions made, six prospects. Offering, \$351.51, donated to the Baptist Children's Village.
3. **New Hope Church, Monticello**: Average attendance, 136, one profession of faith, offering of \$6,730. Shown are the participants and pastor Joey Faulk.
4. **Port Gibson Church, Port Gibson**: July 21 - 24; shown are the participants.
5. **Trinity Church, Amory**: four Saturday mornings, June and July, the youth conducted VBS Beach Blast at the Blue Bluff Campground, Aberdeen. Shown are the participants.



1. Fernwood Church



4. Port Gibson Church



3. New Hope Church



5. Trinity Church

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

1. **Hebron Church, Grenada:** Mission team conducted VBS at the Navajo Indian Reservation at Fort Wingate, N. Mex.; two VBS's daily, with Bible study nightly and construction projects.
2. **Grace Church, Columbus:** June 21; shown is pupil Micah Boterf with a poster he drew.
3. **Springdale Church, Ripley:** July 21 - 28; average attendance, 168; Randy Hamilton, pastor.



1. Hebron Church, Grenada



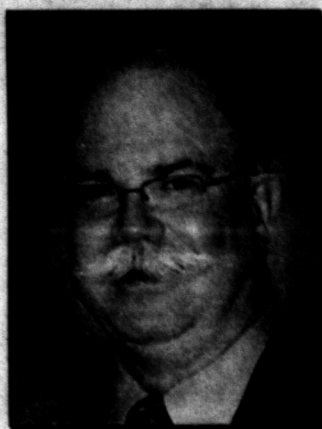
2. Micah Boterf



3. Springdale Church

COLLEGE NEWS

1. Dennis Swanberg will deliver the keynote address at Mississippi College's convocation Aug. 23, 2 p.m., at the A.E. Wood Coliseum on the Clinton campus.
2. **William Carey University's** College of Osteopathic Medicine (WCU-COM) welcomed its newest faculty member to its growing staff. Darrell Lovins, DO, MPH, FACOFP and his wife Denise moved to their new home in Hattiesburg in June. Lovins will be the Associate Dean, Clinical Sciences. Lovins' duties will include the oversight of the clinical curriculum for all four years of osteopathic medical education. He will coordinate and supervise all clinical subjects (clinical skills, Medicine, Surgery, Pediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynecology and related subspecialty fields) for the first two years.



2. Lovins

3. Scott Hummel of Longview, Tex. is the new vice president for advancement and church relations and professor of religion at William Carey University. He comes to Carey from LeTourneau University in Longview where he served as an associate professor of biblical studies and chair of the department of biblical studies and Christian ministries for ten years.



3. Hummel

4. **William Carey University** softball campers pose with Lader Sader Coach Wendy Hogue (standing right) and hundreds of toys and school supplies collected for the Good Shepherd Children's Home in Zamorano Valley, Honduras. Founded by missionaries Greg and Eva Vaughn, Hogue's church, First Church of Runnelstown, participates in mission projects related to the work there.



4. Carey softball campers

5. Fred Smith, who coached the Ripley High School boys track team to a Class 3A state championship, has joined Blue Mountain College as its full-time cross country coach. Smith started the BMC cross country program in 2007, coaching walk-on runners on a part-time basis in limited competition, while still teaching algebra and coaching at Ripley.



Visit us online

@

www.mbc.org

HOMEcomings & REVIVALS

First Church, Taylorsville: Revival, Aug. 17 - 20; Sun., 8:30 and 11 a.m., followed by dinner on the ground and 6:30 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., noon lunch and 7 p.m.; Ray Cummings, speaker; Justin Belew, music.

Sunrise Church, Carthage: Revival, Aug. 17 - 20; Mark Mayo, speaker; Jim McEachern, music; David Addy, pastor.

First Church, Kosciusko: Homecoming and 160th anniversary, Aug. 24; Whit Lewis, speaker, 8:30 a.m.; Barry C. Corbett and Stephen Rone, speakers, 11 a.m.; John David Shaw, speaker, 1 p.m.; revival, Aug. 25 - 27; Bill Hardin, speaker.

Ramah Church, McCall Creek: Revival, Aug. 17 - 20; Sun., 11 a.m., followed by dinner on the grounds and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Gordon McDaniel, speaker.

Silver Springs Church, Osyka: Revival, Aug. 22 - 24; Fri. - Sat., 6:30 p.m.; Sun., 11 a.m., followed by lunch and afternoon services; Gene Douglas, speaker; Karen Smith, music.

Oak Hill Church, Booneville: Revival, Aug. 17 - 20; Sun., 10 and 11 a.m., 5 and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Grady S. McMurtry, speaker; Mark Cagle, pastor.

Mount Vernon Church, Meridian: Revival, Aug. 17 - 20; Sun., 11 a.m. followed by fellowship meal; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Jim Futral, speaker; Jim Rickles, pastor.

Hillsboro Church, Hillsboro: Revival, Aug. 17 - 20; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6:15 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Don Taylor, speaker; Mike Smith, music; Ted Hawkins, pastor.

Short Creek Church, Yazoo City: Homecoming, Aug. 17, 11 a.m., followed by lunch; Sonny Bradshaw, speaker; Bill Hutto, pastor.

Union West Church, Lafayette County: Revival, Aug. 17 - 20; Sun., 11 a.m.; 6:30 p.m. nightly; Michael Baker, speaker; Andrew Basinger, music; Billy Childs, pastor.

Strayhorn Church, Sarah: Revival, Aug. 24 - 27; Austin Moore, speaker; David Johns, music.

Rolling Creek Church, Quitman: Homecoming, Aug. 17; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by lunch; Bud Robinson, speaker; Ronnie Cooper, pastor.



ISRAEL 2009

Dec. 31, 2008 - January 10, 2009

11 day custom travel with small group

Experience Spiritual renewal, Archaeological discovery, Biblical understanding

Contact Dr. Roger Greene

Professor, Christian Studies

Mississippi College, rgreene@mc.edu, 601-925-3291 or 601-924-5403



Carpenter Bus Sales

2007 Clearance Sale!

Save up to \$14,000 on a New 2007 model bus.

Exclusive provider for

LifeWay Church Bus Sales

1.800.370.6180 • carpenterbus.com

TEAM IMPACT

Macedonia Baptist Church

1230 Macedonia Rd.

Brookhaven, Miss.,

August 15-17, 7:00 p.m., nightly

Gospel will be shared with a unique perspective to challenge & encourage

601-833-6760 for more info



Hear Impact ~ See Impact ~ Feel Impact

www.team-impact.com

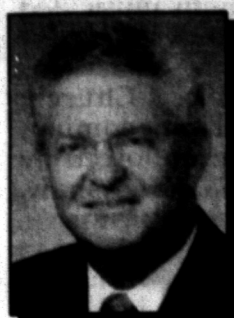


Practical Principles *for* Christian Living



A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE CHRISTIAN ACTION COMMISSION OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION • VOLUME 7 • ISSUE 8

Memorial to the Missing; Domestic Violence Awareness Month



By Jimmy Porter
Executive Director
Mississippi Baptist
Christian Action
Commission

How many pennies do we have in the Memorial to the Missing? The most accurate "guess" is 49,200,000. Approximately 800,000 more pennies are needed. Our goal is to have this project completed by the end of August. So, PLEASE, if you have pennies already collected, get them to us or to your associational missions office and someone from the Baptist Building will pick them up. You are to be commended for such a splendid response of a very worthy project. The impact of seeing fifty million pennies and knowing what they represent is life changing.

Often I am asked, "What can we do as a church or group that will impact our community and our church?" As

I read the August 6 edition of The Clarion Ledger, it became clear to me that Mississippi Baptists must get more involved in an often ignored issue that is present in many of our families, families that sit in the pews of our churches Sunday after Sunday.

The article in the Clarion Ledger that arrested my attention was "Slain Girl Had Life Full of Turmoil." It appears 15-year-old Arkenyella Hoskins' life ended with a bullet to her head and her body dumped under a bridge here in Jackson. This young girl had a very unstable home life, and many others are like her. Sometimes it is because of domestic violence.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month began in October, 1987 and has continued each year. The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) defines domestic violence as "the willful intimidation, assault, battery, sexual assault, and/or other abusive behavior perpetrated by an intimate partner against another." It often results in physical injury, psychologi-

cal trauma, and sometimes death.

One in every four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime. 1.3 million are victims of physical assault by an intimate partner each year. 73% of the victims are female. Females who are 20-24 years of age are at the greatest risk.

Mississippi ranks 2nd highest in the nation for domestic violence (NCADV). Also, our state ranks 9th in the nation for the rate of females murdered by males in single victim/single offender homicides.

An abuser is one who exerts power and control over their partner through various avenues. Sometimes they use coercion and threats along with smashing things, abusing pets, displaying weapons, etc. Often it is emotional abuse when a concerted effort is made to make her feel bad about herself—putting her down, calling her names, humiliating her, etc. Often she is prevented from getting and keeping a job. She is made to ask for money, and he keeps her in the dark on finan-

cial issues. The abused is often isolated because her partner controls what she does, who she sees and to whom she talks. These are just a few of the symptoms.

Church attending families are not exempt from domestic violence. Each Sunday they show up for worship and they need help, even though most will never admit it. The church and/or groups can help by supporting the abuse shelters that might be in your area. If none are available, you might consider looking into providing one. Also, this October do something to observe National Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Perhaps one of the easiest and most beneficial projects is to make those around you aware of the problem, causes, and types of abuse. There is help available.

In Mississippi you can go to www.mcadv.org or call 1-800-898-3234 (Mon.-Fri. 8-5 pm), 1-800-799-7233 (after hours) or 601-981-9196.

Your help is needed.



Ready...or not...

HERE IT COMES!

Either way, GuideStone is ready for your retirement.



GuideStone.org/RetirementReadiness

Are you over 50? And are you sure you're financially ready for your retirement?

There is an easy way to find out, at your own pace and with special attention to the specific needs of those in the ministry.

Our **Preparing for Retirement Tool** is just another way GuideStone helps you manage your retirement assets — both now and after you retire.


GuideStone
Financial Resources

Do well. Do right.

CALL THE LEADER IN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS FOR SOUTHERN BAPTISTS AT 1-888-98-GUIDE.

13706 07/08

Financial Resources

THE VILLAGE VIEW



Dr. Rory Lee, Executive Director

P.O. Box 27
Clinton, MS 39060-0027
(601) 922-2242

www.baptistchildrensvillage.com

GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORY

July 10 - August 10, 2008

HONORS

Dr. Thompson & N MS Pain Mgmt
Mrs. Vangie Fields
Rose Beauchamp
Jerusalem Baptist Church
Connie Drown
Mrs. Elizabeth Curlee
Wesley & Jean East
The Robert Sullivan Family
Charles & Sara Ferrell
Rev. & Mrs. Sterling N. Davis
Bea Foster
Mr. & Mrs. Aubry L. Hays
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Hardy
Mr. & Mrs. Perry E. Atherton
Eddie & Joy Harris
Steven, Debra, Russell &
Thomas Newman
Mason & Virginia Hathorne
The Robert Sullivan Family
Allen Joslin
Mr. J. C. Rhew Jr.
Dr. John McCall
Dr. & Mrs. Gerald J.
Hasselmann
Jimmy & Virginia Powell
The Robert Sullivan Family
Mrs. Camille Thomas
Ms. Linda L. Moss

MEMORIALS

Paul Ables
Ron & Margaret (Caldwell)
Chester
Ray & Jeanne (Caldwell)
Wise
Alton Allred
Dr. & Mrs. Dunbar McCurley
Mrs. Euris Allred
Oldtown Baptist Church-
Pittsboro
Rev. Lowry Anderson
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Fortenberry
Ozella Austin
Ed & Joyce Martin, Kelly &
Boys
Jeff Barber
Mr. & Mrs. Bud Doherty
Edith Barnes
Mrs. Anna W. Rounsaville &
Family

Hazel Barnes
Lisa Sims
Spooky Sims
Kyle Barnett
Valley Park BC-Valley Park
Johnny Basinger
Rev. & Mrs. Cornell
Daughtry
Charles W. Beasley
Ralph, Cheryl Leigh &
Mary Lyn Perkins
Mr. Dewitte Belk
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Georgia Benton
Mr. & Mrs. Stuart Allen
Alvin Berry, Sr.
Bob & Mary Connor
Mrs. Frances Blackwell
Mrs. Mamie Ross
Betty Blankenship
Glenn & Janet Doty
Dr. Barbara Boatright
Mr. & Mrs. Cecil D.
Wilkinson
Mr. A. W. Bouchillon
Mrs. Celeste C. Truitt
Paul Brasher
Mr. Larry Brasher
Mrs. Dora Bridges
Ms. Maggie L. Mahaffey
Tom Broom
Lisa Sims
Spooky Sims
Billy Brown, Jr.
Ms. Ida E. Ingram
Carthell Brown
Mr. Larry Brasher
Nelda Brown
Deer Creek BC-Rolling Fork
Mrs. Louise Bunch
Valley Park Baptist Church
Nancy Burke
Miss Jean Graves
Mr. D. W. Burkes
T.E.L. SSC, Springfield BC-
Morton
Dr. Russ Bush
Lisa Sims
Spooky Sims
Grayson Strong Butler
Jeremy & Renee Williams
Ms. Cissa A. Richardson
Kim Downs Calhoun
Mr. & Mrs. J. W. Waldrup
Lily Carraway
Stan & Gail Tucker

Mrs. Lillie Mae Carraway
Springfield Baptist Church
T.E.L. SSC, Springfield BC-
Morton
Miss Lucy Mikell
Mr. Claude Case
Van Seales SSC, Macedonia
BC
Kay Ethridge Castle
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Davis
Mrs. Inez Chambers
Jo & Jimmie Smithy
Mr. J. Kimble Clark
Ms. Cissa A. Richardson
Midway Baptist Church
Adult Choir
Larry Cole
Mr. & Mrs. Al Ray
Mother of De Lisa Colvin
Mrs. Dora Murray
Mrs. Laverne Compton
Mr. Walter R. Barbee
Mrs. Bobbie Barbee
Inez Cooper
Friendship SSC, Valley Park
BC-VP
Mr. & Mrs. Billy Whitten
Mrs. Inez Cooper
Valley Park BC-Valley Park
Mr. & Mrs. Horace W.
Newman
Mrs. Jean Covert
Mrs. Christine Allen &
Family
Mr. & Mrs. Dan Wright
Joyce Crawford
Mrs. Geneva Burris
Johnny Gerald Crocker
Mr. & Mrs. S. S. Crocker
Sherri McDuffie
Mrs. Charline Daniels
Pat Clark
Clara Mae Roberts
Ray Roberts
Brenda Robertson
Glen B. Davis
Ms. Ruby Wachter Griffith
Grace Davis
Mr. & Mrs. Donald C.
Geoghegan
Jimmy Ray Davis
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth M. Davis
Mr. Roscoe Davis
Mr. & Mrs. Walter B. Moore
Mr. & Mrs. Jay Gore III
Mrs. Mary Ellen Deason
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Polly Crenshaw Deysher
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Petty
Mrs. Allean Doyle
Mr. & Mrs. Terry E.
Champion
Johnny Drown
Mrs. Elizabeth Curlee
Robert Dugan, Sr.
Shuquialak Baptist Church
Mrs. Marlon Duncan
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Nell Dyess
Mr. & Mrs. Irvin B. Faurot
Bobbie Shaw Ellis
Ms. Virginia B. Birdsong
Margaret C. Ellis
Mr. & Mrs. Ernest L. Scruggs
Mrs. Mae Ervin
Mr. & Mrs. Phil Slay
Willie Mae Ervin
Bob & Mary Connor
Terry Evans
Mrs. Janelle Cook, Joann &
Donnie
Mrs. Agnes Ewing
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Colen Faulkner
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Mr. Jerrell Ferguson
Mr. & Mrs. James
Nelda Fitzgerald
Mrs. Mary Nell Aultman
Buck Fondren
Mrs. Betty Lou Carpenter
Mrs. Betty Lou Carpenter
Louise Brown Ford
Mr. & Mrs. Tommy Marshall
Mr. & Mrs. E. E. Fortenberry
Mr. & Mrs. Glen D.
Fortenberry
Mr. Bob Francis
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Ruffin Fyfe
Ms. Barbara B. Easterling
Gregory Stephen Galloway
Mr. & Mrs. Vaughn Galloway

Mr. Roscoe Gammill
Mr. & Mrs. Ronnie G. Beck
John & Lynn Bratton
Myrtice Gardner
Mr. Clarence M. Shannon
O. W. Geeslin
Mr. & Mrs. Walter B. Moore
Mrs. Robert C. Parker
H. M. Gibson
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Benson
Marvin Gibson
Jimmy & Shirley Peeples
Chester Orville Glenn
Mr. & Mrs. James T. Grisham
Ms. Louise N. McCurley
Mr. & Mrs. Nelson Spencer
Jerry Glenn
Mrs. Ruby Jean Chaney
James C. "Jimmy" Godwin
Ms. Karen M. Johnson
Terri Johnson Miciello &
Family
Bobby Gordon
Glenda & Jerry Fry
Jackie Graham
Mrs. Betty L. Hall
Anna Grantham
Temple Baptist Church-
Grenada
Lamar Gray
Mr. & Mrs. Jay Gore III
Sister of Mary Ann Gray
Glenda & Jerry Fry
John Stewart Greer
Mr. & Mrs. Jamie Edwards
Sister-in-law of Bud Greer
Glenda & Jerry Fry
Cled Gregory
Mr. & Mrs. Billie J. Bonner
Mr. & Mrs. Hayes Branscome
Mr. & Mrs. Archie C. Leggett
Don Hamilton
Mr. & Mrs. Glen King
John & Nancy Miller
Mr. & Mrs. J. W. Waldrup
Mabel Hanna
Chris & Sandra Federick
Mrs. Jessie Estelle Calder Hardin
Frances & Rich Defenbaugh
Mrs. Katharine W. Hardy
Mr. & Mrs. John T. Keeton Jr.
Charles "Buck" Harrington
Jimmy, Bebe, Eric & Pete
Harrington
Drew Harrington
Mr. & Mrs. Jackie Wooley &
Jordan
Carr Haskins
Mr. Kirk Haskins
Mrs. Dollye Haynes
Mrs. Peggy Shuckrow
Mrs. Elsie J. Sumrow
Galilee Baptist Church-
Gloster
Mr. & Mrs. James E. Dixon
Mrs. Betty Herod
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Jerry Hill
Mrs. Nancy H. Nassar
Mrs. Grace Hines
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Dr. Wendell Holmes
Bobby & Patsy Brock
Glenda & Jerry Fry
Mrs. Tena Haskins
Ms. Mary Allen Varnell
Mr. Holston
Mr. & Mrs. W. K. Riggins
Paul W. Hopping
Mildred Stevenson
Mrs. Doloris Horton
Mrs. Katharine W. Hardy
Mr. & Mrs. John T. Keeton Jr.
Howard, II
Mr. & Mrs. Carl E. Howard
Mr. & Mrs. Bobby W. Dye
Jane Hutton
Renee & Jeremy Williams
Ray, Jeanne & Russ Wise
Frank James
Glenda & Jerry Fry
Lettie Johnson
Mrs. Althea M. Partridge
Frank Jones
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Herrington
Mrs. Nancy Lee Dabbs Kennedy
Lauderdale County Baptist
Assoc
Kate King
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Fortenberry

Rose Hemphill Kyle
Mr. Kyle Hearn
Mr. & Mrs. Albert N.
Hemphill
Gordon Ladner
Mrs. Jean Saucier
Mrs. Jewell R. Laird
Mrs. Louise Allgood
Coach Timothy Land
Ms. Jeannie M. Lane
Tammie Charnell Lang
Ms. Eva L. Winingham
Dennis Larkin
Glenda & Jerry Fry
Ms. Martha C. Leach
Jim & Gloria Leach
Sandra Little
Gleaners Class, Pilgrim's Rest
BC
Laken Lumpkin
Johnny, Matty Jo & Mack Fox
Terry & Rosaphine Kennedy
Julia Lynn
Mr. & Mrs. Dale Stuart
Darrel Maddox
Ms. Maida C. Stegall
O. K. Magee
Lisa Sims
Spooky Sims
Mr. R. W. "Dike" Mallory
Mr. & Mrs. John A. Phillips
Dale & Sharon Hays
Julia Martinez
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Herrington
Mr. Jasper Cary "Jake" Mashburn
Mr. & Mrs. Timothy W.
Moore
First Baptist Church, Chicora
Mrs. Doris Ann Mathes
Fidelis SSC, Utica BC-Utica
Doris McCain
Jerry & Beverly Van Namen
Mrs. Inella McCain
Terri Johnson Miciello &
Family
Ms. Karen M. Johnson
Kenneth L. McCalfin
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Weeks
Mr. & Mrs. J. Kirkham Povall
Timberland Bank
Ms. Ruby Wachter Griffith
Mrs. Phebe McCully
Mrs. Lee Audis Jayroe
Dr. Linuel Jayroe
Dr. Linda Pepper
Cecil Larry McDaniel
Ms. Ruby Wachter Griffith
Mr. James McGrew
Mr. & Mrs. Cotton Foster
Mrs. Claudine McInnis
Fidelis SSC, Morrison Hgts
BC
Mrs. Billie Lynn Arthur
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth E. Lee
Kelli McNeil
Paul & Lavenia Bullard
Brooks McPhail
Frank, Bill & Dennis McPhail
Mr. Herman McPhail
Friendship SSC, Valley Park
BC
Valley Park Baptist Church
Mr. Ted Miles
Springfield Baptist Church
David Milner, Sr.
Bud & Charlotte Vickers
Mrs. Maudell K. Mitchell
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Dick Moore
Mrs. Felicia Taylor
Gene Moore
Ms. Helen Russom
Mr. Walter Lamar Moore
Mr. Mark Scobey
Robert Earl Moore
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Harold Earl Morgan
Dungan Engineering P.A.
Mitchell Leland Morgan
Jack, Hilda & Kevin Hasson
Mr. K. E. Morgan
Mr. William H. Myrick
Mrs. Ann Morris
Paul & Lavenia Bullard
Jo & Jimmie Smithy
Gordon Netterville
Mr. & Mrs. Henry W. Darden
Ann Newby
Adult Ladies SSC, Springdale
BC
Roy Newsom
Lisa Sims
Spooky Sims

Mrs. Marie Norsworthy
Ms. Edythe M. McArthur
Lamont Nowell
Mr. & Mrs. Bill E. Coleman
Mr. Hubert Nowell
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Mrs. Frances Nowlin
Mr. & Mrs. E. J. Grisham Sr.
John W. Oakley
Mr. James C. Peay
Mary Cowser Oakley
Mr. James C. Peay
Marion F. Parker, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Albert N.
Hemphill
Mrs. Cleo Bullock Parkman
Joe & June Bullock & Family
Mike Parsons
Rev. & Mrs. Cornell
Daughtry
Mr. Gerald Pennington
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
William "Bill" Stephen Peugh
Ms. Barbara B. Easterling
Mrs. Joyce C. Aycock &
Family
Mrs. Martha Kate Phillips
Dr. & Mrs. Anthony S. Kay
Mrs. Laverne Pickle
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Catherine Pitts
Bill & Doris Stanley & Family
Mr. Troy Pitts
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Clyde Posey, Sr.
Mr. & Mrs. Charles K. Baxter
James V. Poss
Mrs. Johnnie L. Poss
Mrs. Evelyn Poteete
Brenda Harrelson
Danny & Debbi Harrelson
Evelyn Harrelson
Don L. Prisock
Mrs. Mildred N. Sellers
Mrs. Thelma Elizabeth Purdie
Mr. & Mrs. Jay Gore III
Mrs. Jean S. Moss & Family
Frances & Rich Defenbaugh
Nancy Annette May Purvis
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Oakes
Wes Raspberry
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Judge R. B. Reeves
Mrs. Tena Haskins
Mr. & Mrs. Jewell Reeves
Mr. Dennis Carroll Reeves
Mr. R. B. Reeves
Dr. & Mrs. Tom Jeffcoat
Wayne Reeves
Mrs. Addie Kirkland
Millie Renick
Gerald & Dottie Buchanan
James Rivers
Ms. Janice M. Thames
Mary Roberts
Ms. Maida C. Stegall
Mrs. Florine Roberts
Mr. & Mrs. James H. Gibbs
Mrs. Edna Robertson
Galilee Baptist Church-
Gloster
Mrs. Elsie J. Sumrow
Ms. Carole C. Lockwood
Bobby & Patsy Brock
Mrs. Belle Rorie
Mr. & Mrs. Ernest L. Scruggs
Mr. Earnest Russom
Mr. & Mrs. Noah M. Mills
Ray Rutland
Ms. Patsy Welborn
Louise Salley
Mrs. Robert C. Parker
Roy H. Sawyer, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Ernest L. Scruggs
Jimmy Seal
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel A. Smith
Rufus Ray Seal
Mr. & Mrs. Bob Nix
Dave Sheets
Ms. Esther R. Deming
Frances Shelton
Eloise Crossley's SSC, FBC-
Columbus
Mr. Russell Shirk
Trinity Baptist Church
Mr. Glenn Simmons
Mr. & Mrs. Paul D. Allen
Mr. Lewis Coleman Sims
Ms. Ruby Wachter Griffith
Mr. & Mrs. Robert L. Yeager
Jr.
Mr. J. L. Sison
Mrs. Mattie B. Flynt

Doris Smith
David & Jamie King
Greg & Jennifer and Children
Sharla
Mr. & Mrs. Jasper Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Kam Quinn
Mr. Hollis Smith
Jerusalem BC-Kosciusko
Moree' Smothers
Ms. Barbara B. Easterling
Mr. Bobby Stallings
Mr. & Mrs. Stuart Allen
Mr. & Mrs. Tim V. Foley Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Pat Ingram
Jennifer Stephenson
Mr. & Mrs. Robert W. King
Gwyneth S. Stokes
Mr. Ward G. Stokes
Mrs. Joyce Stroud
Mr. & Mrs. Cliff Mangum
Mr. & Mrs. Perry E. Atherton
The Ray Mangum Family
Mr. Edgar Taylor
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Mr. George B. Taylor
Mrs. Elizabeth P. Tullos
Mrs. Mary "Mazie" Taylor
Mr. & Mrs. Jesse R. Johnson
Halbert Thames
Ms. Bertie M. Kennedy
Mrs. Johnnie Ann Thompson
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Mrs. Mary Tisdale
Mr. & Mrs. W. M. McElroy
Steve McElroy
Sandra Trammell
Mr. & Mrs. Ed Connolly
Mr. Danny Tutor
Mr. Bob Poe
Dr. & Mrs. Anthony S. Kay
Grady Frank Vaughn, Sr.
Rev. & Mrs. Cornell
Daughtry
Cary Walker
Mr. & Mrs. Jack Churchwell
Mrs. Edith Walker
Mount Pleasant BC-Gloster
Siloam Baptist Church-
Meadville
Ervin Wallace
Lisa Sims
Spooky Sims
Ricky Waltman
Ms. Dinah N. Adams
Mr. Douthit Wamble
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Arza R. "Bob" Warner
Trinity Baptist Church
Mary Frances Watts
Lisa Sims
Spooky Sims
Mr. Jason Weathers
Bobby & Patsy Brock
Glenda & Jerry Fry
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Sullivan
Mrs. Dora Murray
The Bob Sullivans
The Clay (Jan) Englishes
Robert Allen Weaver
Mr. & Mrs. L. E. Bennett
Millard Whitley
Bethany Baptist Church
Bobbie J. White
Mr. & Mrs. J. A. Maggio Jr.
Milton "Shine" Wilkinson
Ms. Carolyn F. Nelson
Emma J. (Ann) Willett
Mr. & Mrs. Roy C. Meek
Ben Williams
Bobby & Patsy Brock
Robbie Brock
Mr. Gary Willmon
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Rev. Jerry G. Wise
Mrs. Edwina M. Wise
Mr. Gene Woodruff
Mr. & Mrs. Robert L. Yeager
Jr.



BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

A Maturing Life

Hebrews 5:11-6:12

By Janice H. Fortenberry

We just took our grandson and daughter to the beach for a few days. Evan is 22 months old and I am amazed at how quickly he has transformed from a tiny infant to a rambunctious little boy, reaching and surpassing those developmental milestones.

Doctors and parents alike routinely track the physical, emotional and mental development of children. Monitoring growth is a parameter of well-being and, as the development unfolds, our definition of "normal" is shaped as well.

But this begs a question: We place so much emphasis on carefully studying the maturation process in our young, but how many of us pay as much attention to the spiritual maturity in ourselves? Every house probably has a door frame where we've marked the height of our chil-

dren at various points. How many of us have a "yardstick" to keep tabs on whether we are moving toward greater spiritual maturity and greater Godliness?

The writer of Hebrews dedicated much of his epistle to the Hebrew Christians who were saved but had not moved beyond the basic understanding of salvation. In other words, they were not "walking the walk," and the writer was frustrated with their stagnation. In our focal passage this week, he points out that there are several ways to be proactive in this serious issue of spiritual maturity.

First, he points out that mature Christians should be able to discern good and evil (Heb. 5:11-14). The reference to good and evil in this passage has more to do with the fact these were nominal



Fortenberry

Christians who leaned on Mosaic laws and rituals for comfort rather than stretching their minds to explore the mysteries of the Christian faith. The writer was frustrated that these Christians were so immature they could not go beyond the ABC's of Christianity and truly grasp the greater story of God's redemptive plan, specifically the inferiority of Melchizedek's priesthood compared to the superiority of Christ's. He wanted desperately to take his audience to the depths of Christ's role as the eternal high priest but couldn't because of their stunted growth and rudimentary understanding.

"Much more could be said about this subject. But it is hard to explain, and all of you are slow to understand." (5:11 CEV).

Here's a quick maturity test for you and me. How would you answer these questions? (1) How has Christ dwelling in you changed you and the choices you

make? (2) Can you give examples of where your faith has made a difference in your life?

See? It gets difficult quickly if you are a Christian in name only, doesn't it? Can you talk about your faith without lapsing into simply echoing what you hear from the pulpit? Clichés are cheap, they are shallow and they are a red flag of stunted spiritual growth. Mature Christians can quickly and readily tell others about how their faith guides them, sustains them, comforts them and convicts them.

Secondly, we have to acknowledge that growing spiritually does not happen automatically. It requires both our effort and God's help. (Heb. 6:1-8) This passage is difficult and has to be read carefully. Make sure you understand that true salvation cannot be lost (vv. 6-8). However, we can be shallow Christians; we can skim along the surface and never dig for deeper truth; we can march to church on a regular basis and never know the joy of salvation; we can make decisions that contradict our faith. All of these are symptoms of spiritual infancy.

And, finally, we are reminded that God sees right through us (Heb. 6:9-12). Spiritual infancy is not what God wants for us, but it's amazing the numbers of people who settle for superficiality just because it's easy and comfortable. I prayed once for spiritual awareness and got it, and it was the most humbling experience of my life. I realized I was spiritually lazy and I was missing the power that comes with an intimate communion with God. In short, I was in the comfort zone of the surface. It was a struggle to get honest with God; it was painful to acknowledge what I'd been missing; and it took hard work to make my faith a way of life rather than a badge I wear when it's convenient.

Developmental milestones in our Christian walk can make the difference between just living and living victoriously. Personally, I think I'm going to back up to the "spiritual door-frame" regularly to keep track of my progress. God wants us to truly grow up.

Fortenberry is a member of First Church, McComb.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Jerusalem: Facing Criticism

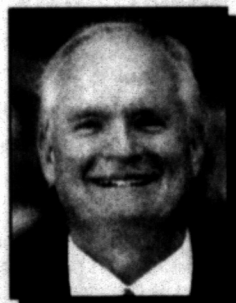
Lesson Passage: Acts 21:17-29, 39

By W. Wayne VanHorn

Bro. Archie Herrin was my Associational Missions Director for twelve years when I served as pastor of FBC, Columbia. He gave all the pastors a golf towel printed with the title "Handling Criticism." Archie knew all of us would face criticism at one time or another in our ministries. Enumerated on the towel were the following six steps to handling criticism: Listen to it, Evaluate it, Learn from it, Respond to it, Forget it, and Keep on Serving. Good advice. That towel hangs in my office at Mississippi College to this day. This week's lesson is about the undeserved criticism Paul faced in Jerusalem. The goal is to help you respond to undeserved criticism in positive ways.

1. Some Criticism Is Unfair (Acts 21:17-21)

Paul shared countless stories of how God was working in the lives of Gentile converts when he returned to Jerusalem at the conclusion of his third missionary journey. The Christian message was spreading; the Church leaders in Jerusalem rejoiced. However, they felt compelled to tell Paul how many thousands of Jewish converts in Jerusalem were criticizing him for allegedly telling Jewish converts among the Gentiles to ignore the customs of Judaism. The criticism was unfair. Paul actually tried to conform to Jewish expectations when doing so meant more opportunities to share the Gospel. Paul's stance against the traditions of the elders only became apparent at those times when such traditions were put ahead of the call for repentance and for faith in Jesus.



VanHorn

2. Take Positive Action (Acts 21:22-26)

To signify his good intentions and to avoid unnecessary trouble, Paul submitted to the advice of the Church leaders in the matter of the vow four men had taken. The practice of Judaism was for the men to shave their heads, a sign of humility, and to give payment to the temple treasury. Paul did not have to agree to this request and doing so did not bring him closer to God. Rather, he voluntarily submitted to the request for the sake of the Gospel. He viewed the matter as providing an opportunity to advance the cause of Christ.

Our natural tendency is to strike back when we face unfair criticism. Paul demonstrated that true believers can humble themselves and submit to the counsel of others if doing so opens doors for the Gospel and for positive reconciliation. Such submission is not easy, but the possibility of reconciliation is worth it.

3. Some Criticism Is Untrue (Acts 21:27-29)

No matter what you do to

avert criticism, some people will find fault with you. Paul's humility and submission to the measures prescribed by the Church leaders were intended to ward off criticism. Instead some Jews from the province of Asia, who had seen a Greek man named Trophimus with Paul in the city, assumed Paul had taken him into the temple. Paul was accused of violating the Jewish Law since Trophimus was a non-Jew. The Jews seized Paul, accused him of preaching against Jewish customs prescribed in the Law of Moses, and of bringing a Greek into the temple. While this criticism was inaccurate and undeserved, the Jews were effective in starting a small riot. The mob wanted to kill Paul. Only the intervention of the Roman soldiers prevented Paul from being beaten to death.

If you find yourself the target of unjust criticism, remember that some criticism is untrue and that true believers have been subjected to false criticism many times. Knowing that you are not alone in experiencing this type of persecution will strengthen your resolve to persevere. Sharing your hurt with a trusted

friend will soften the blow and accelerate the healing process.

4. Make Positive Statements (Acts 21:39)

Paul made an additional effort to calm the Jewish crowd just before he was put into protective custody. He spoke to his fellow Jews in their native tongue, Hebrew (or Aramaic). He told them about his Jewish heritage and his zeal for destroying the Church. He also shared his conversion experience and his testimony for Christ. In the end, the crowd was so prejudiced against Paul nothing he said could change their minds. They wanted him dead (Acts 22:22).

Though the result was not what Paul had hoped, at least he tried to calm the crowd and to improve the situation. We should see every episode of criticism as an opportunity to grow spiritually. The process always will be tough and undesirable, but God will bless you as you face criticism in a Christian manner.

VanHorn is dean of the School of Christian Studies & the Arts at Mississippi College and a member of Morrison Heights Church, Clinton.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats,

no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be

clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Photographs can not be returned.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

THE BAPTIST
Record

Tragedy turns into story of redemption, forgiveness

TULLAHOMA, Tenn. (BP) — A 28-year-old man accepted Christ in jail after causing a tragedy that had left a pastor feeling responsible for the death of a church deacon.

Tim McGehee, pastor of Grace Church in Tullahoma, Tn., and first vice president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, said he was returning home from a hospital visit April 28 when he noticed a car speeding up behind him on a rural road. McGehee then noticed a Lowe's truck parked in front of a home along the road ahead.

"When I looked back in the rearview mirror, that car was on top of me and he hit me," McGehee told Baptist Press. "He knocked me into that Lowe's truck, and then my truck spun around."

The driver of the car, Kimery Hill, sped off with his three-year-old daughter as a passenger. The pastor sustained minor injuries including a mild concussion, and when he tried to get out of his pickup he fell to the ground.

"Some Good Samaritans came up and told me to stay down. They had an ambulance on the way," McGehee said. "When the ambulance got there, they told me, 'This first ambulance is going to get the other guy,' and I said, 'What guy?' and they said, 'The guy you hit.' I said, 'The guy I hit? I don't remember hitting anybody,' and they said, 'Yeah, you hit a guy.'"

Bobby Brown, a 69-year-old deacon at Longview Church in nearby Unionville, had walked out to his yard to direct the Lowe's truck, which was delivering shingles. McGehee served as youth pastor at Longview 20 years ago, and Grace Church recently had ordained one of its members, Jonathan Osterhaus, to serve as pastor of Longview Church.

"I just was laying there on the grass waiting for another ambulance when Jonathan got there," McGehee recounted. "He said, 'Are you OK?' and I said, 'How'd you get here?' and he said somebody had called him. I said, 'Did they tell you I was in a wreck?' and he said, 'Yeah. Bro. Tim, I'm going to go with Bobby to the hospital.' I said, 'Bobby? Bobby who?' He said, 'Bobby Brown. That's who you hit.' I said, 'Oh, no!' and I just started crying because I had known Bobby for 20 years. He was the treasurer, Sunday School director, and a deacon at

Longview Church, and I performed his son's wedding."

McGehee was transported to a hospital, where he learned that Brown had died en route. While he was waiting on a gurney in the emergency room for examination, McGehee said he saw police officers bring in a man in handcuffs. It turned out Hill had been driving about 100 mph and had passed an officer before causing the accident. That officer had turned her car around and was in the process of initiating a pursuit.

Someone who witnessed the accident followed Hill to his sister's house and notified police of his whereabouts. He was charged with one count of vehicular homicide, five counts of reckless endangerment, and one count of second offense driving on a suspended license, the local newspaper reported.

McGehee said he was told Hill had alcohol, marijuana, and methamphetamine in his system when he was arrested.

"The very next day after this happened, I was in my bedroom weeping and my wife came back there and she said, 'Are you OK?' and I said, 'I can't believe I killed somebody,'" McGehee told BP. "She said, 'You didn't kill anybody,' and I said, 'I did,' and she said, 'No. You had no control. You got hit at that speed, and your truck was out of control,' and I said, 'I'll never be able to go on. I won't be able to forgive myself,' but then I started thinking she was right. It wasn't me. It was the other guy, and I needed to start praying for him that God could bring good out of this."

The next Sunday, McGehee preached about the need to forgive Hill and to pray for God to bring good from the tragedy. The members of Grace Church also started praying for Hill, and Osterhaus went to visit him in



NEW LIFE — Kimery Hill, a 28-year-old man charged with vehicular homicide after causing the death of a local church deacon, is baptized by pastor Jonathan Osterhaus in the church where the deacon served for decades. (Photo courtesy of Grace Church)

jail. On the second visit, the pastor of Longview Church led Hill and another inmate to accept forgiveness and salvation in Jesus.

Hill wanted to be baptized, and a jail official was willing to make arrangements for the two inmates to go to Longview Church for a baptism ceremony.

"On July 9, two of the deputies brought him and this other prisoner to Longview Church — the very place where I used to be the youth minister and the very place where Bobby Brown was a patriarch, a pillar of the church — and Jonathan Osterhaus, the new preacher, baptized the prisoners at 2 o'clock on a Wednesday afternoon to a church almost full of people. It was amazing. It was truly unbelievable."

Shackles were put back on the prisoners' ankles and wrists when they left the water, and they sat on the front row with two deputies. After the ceremony, McGehee approached Hill for the first time.

"I went up to him and I knelt down on one knee, and I said, 'I'm Tim McGehee, the guy you hit,' and he started crying and I started crying, and he mouthed, 'I'm sorry,' and I said, 'I know you are. I forgive you, but God has used this for good.' Then we also have on video Bobby Brown's wife hugging this guy and telling him she forgives him. It was just amazing."

Hill's grandmother attended the baptism ceremony and said she had been praying for years that her grandson would follow Jesus.

"She's a godly woman, and she was there and just weeping and waving her arms. When he got baptized, she was so happy," McGehee recounted. "I said, 'I know you've been praying for him a long time,' and she said, 'I just hate that it had to take something like this.' I said, 'Well, before Saul could get saved, God had to blind him.' She said, 'You're right.'"

"I said, 'Knowing Bobby, he would have gladly given his life up for someone to come to know Jesus.' His wife said the same thing," McGehee added. "She said if three of us would have been standing on the side of the road — me, Kimery, and Bobby — and God said, 'One of you has got to die today,' she said Bobby would have been the first one to step up and say, 'I volunteer because Tim is a young pastor with a young family and he's got a church, and this other man is a lost man. I'll volunteer.' I thought that was amazing."

Another twist to the story, McGehee said, is that when Osterhaus preached in view of a call at Longview Church two weeks before the accident, he told the church members he wanted to know individually if they were right with God.

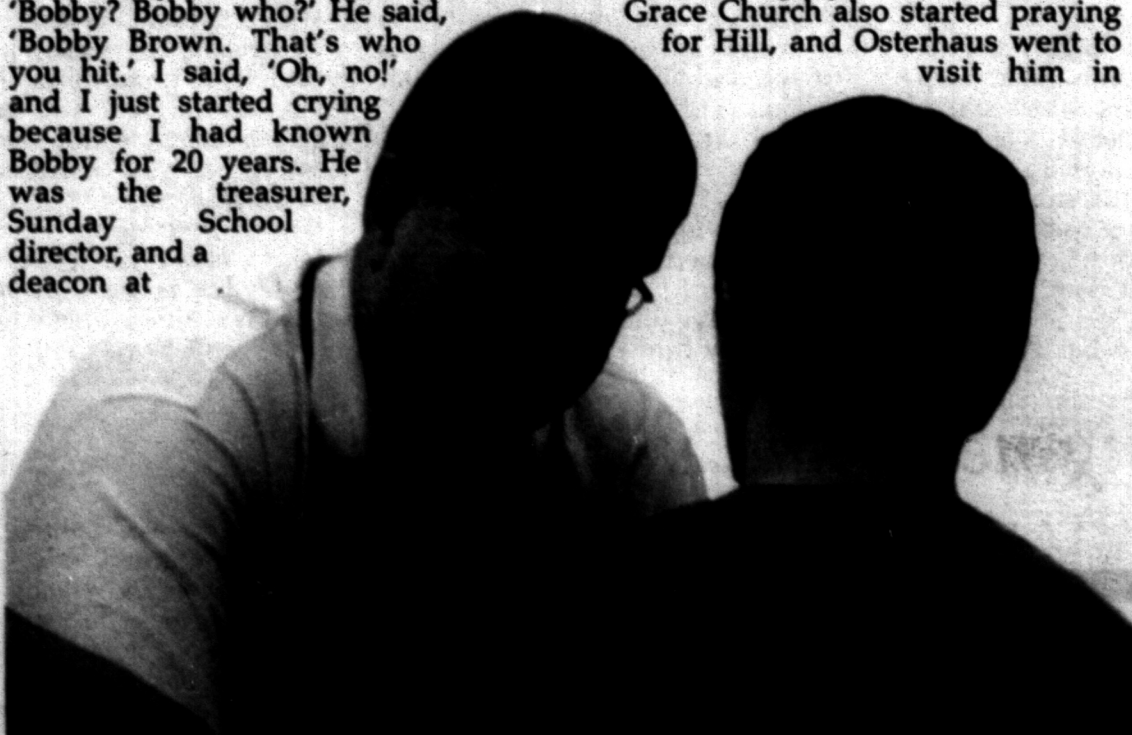
"He said, 'If you call me as your pastor, one of these days I will eventually have one of your funerals. When I do, I don't want to speculate if you were a Christian. I want to be able to stand before everybody assembled at your funeral and say I know without a shadow of a doubt this person was a Christian,'" McGehee said.

"After the service, the first man that came to him was Bobby Brown, who said, 'I want you to know I've accepted Christ and I've been living for Him many years.' Two weeks later Bobby was killed and that was Jonathan's first funeral."

In order to follow up on Hill's decision to follow Christ, McGehee said he sent the prisoner a book for new believers and a book by Max Lucado along with a "note that said I want him to be assured I love him and I'm praying for him and I forgive him."

Osterhaus, meanwhile, has asked to become the chaplain at the Bedford County Jail where Hill is being detained about an hour south of Nashville.

"The jail didn't have a chaplain, so this may work out for even others," McGehee said.



FORGIVEN — Tim McGehee, pastor of Grace Church in Tullahoma, Tn., speaks with Kimery Hill, the man who caused McGehee to lose control of his truck and fatally strike a Baptist deacon, after Hill was baptized at Longview Church in nearby Unionville. McGehee told Kimery Hill he forgave him. (Photo courtesy of Grace Church)